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# Pick for CIA spooked

## Ron's selection for director job now withdraws

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WASHINGTON—Fallout from the Iran-Contra scandal yesterday claimed another victim when Robert Gates withdrew his name as President Reagan's candidate to become the new director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

New chief of staff Howard Baker, who himself turned down the job when it was offered several weeks ago, said the White House had hoped to tap a new nominee yesterday but was unable to do so.

Among candidates mentioned as a successor to the cancer-stricken William Casey were FBI Director William Webster, former CIA

Deputy Director Bobby Inman and Tower Commission members Brent Scowcroft and John Tower.

But one White House official cautioned against speculation on those names and suggested there might be a dark-horse candidate, and Inman told United Press International last night he did not want to be considered for the job.

### Await the verdict

Gates told Reagan there was "strong sentiment in the Senate" to await the verdict of its special investigating committee on the Iran-Contra scandal before acting on the nomination, and that such "a prolonged period of uncertainty would be harmful" to the spy agency. The Senate probe could take six months.

But even if a vote could have been forced more quickly, Reagan's allies on Capitol Hill had run into difficulty lining up enough Gates backers, and the administration could ill afford a bruising battle over the Iran-Contra tainted nomination.

Reagan, after meeting with



Gates, accepted the withdrawal with "great regret" and said: "I have been impressed with the class he has shown under the enormous pressures of recent weeks.

"At any other time, I am certain that he would easily have been confirmed without delay," he said.

Gates, at 43, would have been the youngest director in the CIA's 40-year history.

Instead, he became the second person to fall in the wake of last Thursday's Tower Commission report.

critical report on the Iran-contra operation.

Foremost among questions raised about Mr. Gates involved his role in preparing the written statement presented by then-CIA Director William Casey before the intelligence panel last Nov. 21 that failed to mention a suspected diversion of funds to the contras; whether the National Security Council staff influenced the preparation of CIA intelligence data that was used to justify the Iran arms sales; and whether he had encouraged an invasion of Libya in the summer of 1985.

In a four-page letter to the intelligence panel yesterday, Mr. Gates refuted what he said were "egregious allegations." On questions about the Casey testimony, Mr. Gates said the CIA director "changed a good deal himself in the last 24 hours" before it was presented to the Senate panel.

Mr. Gates also said that the NSC "was not involved in drafting" or reviewing the Iran intelligence data prior to its completion and that was verified by agency memos. He also supplied a secret memo to the panel in which he had argued against a Libyan invasion.

Mr. Cohen and Mr. Boren said they had no objections to Mr. Gates staying on as deputy director of the CIA because there was no evidence

to disqualify him. But, given the current climate of the ongoing Iran-contra investigations, lawmakers felt that there had to be a "higher standard" for the next chief of the CIA.

Meanwhile, a spokeswoman for Georgetown University Hospital said Mr. Casey had been released from the hospital, where he had had a cancerous brain tumor removed.

The spokeswoman, Cynthia Byers, told the Associated Press that Mr. Casey was discharged Saturday, nearly 11 weeks after he was struck by brain seizures and rushed to the hospital. He had resigned last month after the surgery.